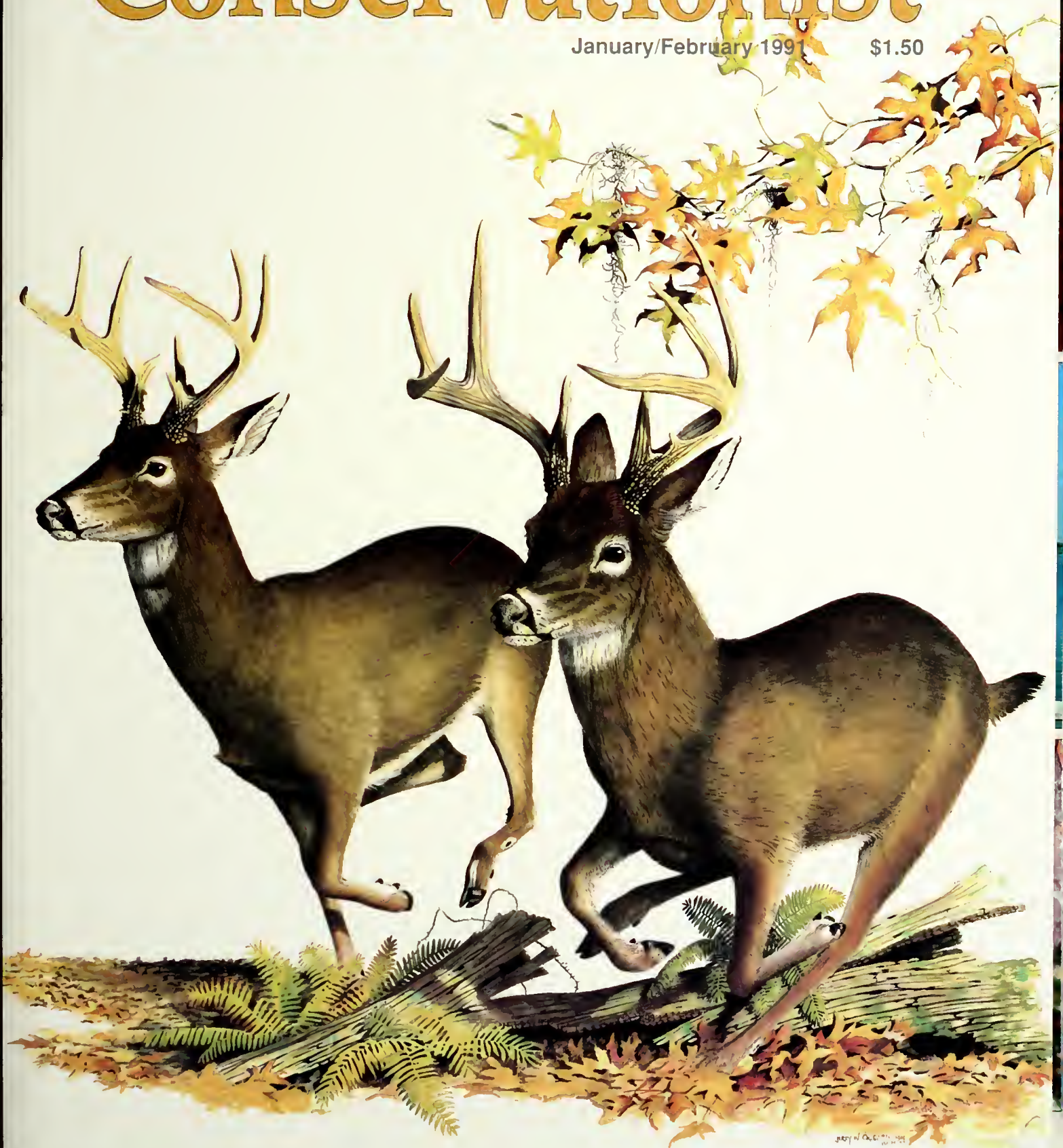


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JOEY W. COOPER



A. Kell McInnis III

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to each of you. My name is Kell McInnis and I have been serving as Deputy Secretary of the Department since March of 1988 prior to being named Acting Secretary in October of last year.

In the early days of the Roemer Administration I was recruited to the Department from the Attorney General's office where I worked in the Lands and Waterbottoms Section of the Natural Resources Division. In that capacity, I also served as General Counsel for the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism from 1980 until my decision to come to Wildlife and Fisheries.

Having been born in New Orleans and residing in Baton Rouge since 1955, I have had the pleasure of experiencing most of Louisiana's outdoor activities. The experiences I gained from my grandfather and father are now my responsibility to pass on to the next generation and those to come.

Prior to accepting the position of Deputy Secretary, I volunteered my personal time supporting various conservation-minded organizations including Ducks Unlimited, the Louisiana Wildlife Federation, GCCA, the Nature Conservancy and the Wild Turkey Federation. During my tenure I have been responsible for the administrative supervision of the Enforcement Division of the Department along with coordination of legislation sponsored by or affecting the Department. This has been a challenge that could not have been successfully addressed without the cooperation of many of the dedicated employees of the Department.

As Acting Secretary I am committed to continuing the "tight ship" reforms and modernization policies instituted under the leadership of Virginia Van Sickle. We have made a lot of progress in the last 2 1/2 years and with continued support from the staff and the public, we will continue to work toward being one of the best Wildlife and Fisheries agencies in the Country. We have been blessed with an abundance of natural resources here in Louisiana but it will require proper management and more utilization of these species to ensure that they will be available to future generations.



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*First Jump. Painting by Jerry Oxley, Jonesville.
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Happy Landing. Photo by Joe Mac Hudspeth.





The North American Waterfowl Management Plan is a multi-national treaty to protect and enhance waterfowl habitat. Louisiana, which contains almost half of the nation's estuarine coastal marshes and winters millions of migratory birds, is moving ahead.

UPDATE: NAWMP

BY MAURICE N. COCKERHAM

Dawn broke clear and cool over the coastal marsh of the Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge at Grand Chenier, Louisiana on October 26, 1990.

By ten o'clock, dozens of guests and several media crews were being ferried into the depths of the refuge to

attend the dedication of the latest North American Waterfowl Management Plan project.

At first glance, the Price Lake Project site appeared somewhat unimposing. There was a large water control structure, equipped with flap gates, fixed weirs and drop gates. To the inexperienced eye it was not unlike hundreds of other water control structures dotting Louisiana's vast expanse of coastal marsh.

But, alas, there was a second, identical structure barely visible across the marsh. Between the two concrete and aluminum structures, we were looking at a state-of-the-art advancement in marsh restoration and enhancement.

Those two structures provide almost total water control for some seven thousand acres of marsh. Why is that important? Well, consider this: the Price Lake area winters about 20,000 waterfowl annually, including both diving ducks and dabblers. About 10,000 blue and snow geese make their winter homes there. In addition, the area is crowded with a multitude of shore birds and wading birds, both migrant and resident, ranging from stilts to pelicans. And finally, it represents yet another chunk of Louisiana's estuarine marsh system...that vital "nursery ground" so vital to the life cycle of innumerable marine species.

And the Price Lake area was dying, just like so very much of our precious marsh. Man's bumbling attempts at "improving" the coastal marshes for agriculture, for oil and gas exploitation, for flood control, and for other purposes have forever changed the natural patterns which created and sustained the marsh. Devegetation is the inevitable result.

More and more of the marsh grasses and other plant life was simply dying. Without the intertwined root systems to stabilize the viscous soil, it was simply washing away. Once viable marsh was being replaced by open water.

But not any longer. The two strategically placed structures at Price Lake allow for complete dewatering capability, salinity control, water level control and the movement of vital nutrients and estuarine organisms into and out of the area.

Initially, marsh restoration plans call for dewatering the area. Although that smacks of "draining the marsh," it is only a temporary measure, allowing for oxidation and reduction of sub-surface soils which, in turn, will

lead to revegetation by marsh grasses and other plant life.

Then the area will be reflooded, but this time rainwater will be the primary source of water, and the inflow of salt water from the Gulf will be rigidly controlled.

Like almost all projects under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP), the Price Lake Project was jointly funded. In this case, by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, which operates the Rockefeller Refuge, and by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Ducks Unlimited.

While it is true that the seven thousand acres of the Price Lake Project represents only one small step toward preserving our coastal marshes and, thus, our waterfowl populations, Confucius is said to have noted that even a journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.

In reality, a substantial number of small steps have already been taken in the battle to save the waterfowl of the North American Continent, but the fate of our ducks and geese is inexorably bound to the fate of our coastal marshes and other wetlands.

In 1985, the plight of waterfowl, primarily ducks, in North America had reached crisis proportions. Total populations of all ducks were down drastically and some populations were nearing a critical stage where the recovery potential of the species could well be threatened.

In the summer of 1985 the Fall Flight Forecast released by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service rested at 62 million ducks. That was the lowest figure projected in the history of the annual waterfowl surveys, which began in the early 1950s.

There were "natural" causes at work, to be sure. The vast Prairie Pothole Region, a sprawling expanse of ponds, lakes and prairie marshes spread across southern Manitoba, Saskatchewan and

The latest NAWMP project in Louisiana, a large water control structure, was recently completed at Price Lake on the Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge. From left, J.R. Vincent, Ducks Unlimited; Jerome Jackson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and A. Kell McInnis, acting secretary for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, stand before the observation platform at the project dedication.





Alberta provinces in Canada and reaching southward into Minnesota, Montana and the Dakotas, remained in the grips of a prolonged drought. The drought not only presented a direct threat to the survival and nesting success of some seventy-five percent of the continent's ducks, it allowed agricultural interests to drain and fill the wetlands and destroy more and more of that all important nesting habitat.

But the habitat destruction did not begin with the drought, nor was it confined to Canada, nor even to the northern states. At the southern end of the continent, "progress" was also destroying the vital wetlands critical to healthy waterfowl populations.

Due partially to natural causes, but primarily to the meddlesome manipulations of man, the traditional wintering grounds for migrating waterfowl were disappearing. Swamps, marshes and other wetlands were, and still are, being drained and destroyed at an alarming rate. Even more ominous is the destruction of the coastal marshes.

Louisiana contains almost half of the nation's estuarine coastal marshes and they are rapidly disappearing. Man has constructed levees, dug canals and ditches and diverted natural watershed patterns. The result has been the diversion of silt and sediment which once replenished our swamps and marshes, and the steady encroachment of salt water from the Gulf of Mexico.

The winter haven for millions of ducks,

geese and a host of other wildlife species, the irreplaceable rest stop for additional millions of ducks and other birds migrating to and from Mexico and South America, the primary "nursery ground" for most marine species in the Gulf, and an entire way of life unique to coastal Louisiana is simply washing into the depths of the Gulf of Mexico. Forty square miles of coastal marsh is simply disappearing each year!

Something HAD to be done to save the continent's waterfowl. The problem was simply too great for Ducks Unlimited, that valiant organization of sportsmen-conservationists which has struggled for years to protect and enhance waterfowl habitat...it was too great, even, for the governments of the United States or Canada. It was a problem that demanded the most comprehensive conservation effort ever undertaken.

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan is, in reality, a multi-national treaty. Canada and the United States initiated the pact in 1986. Now Mexico has also signed on.

The NAWMP is a fifteen year, 1.5 BILLION dollar undertaking with an ultimate goal of protecting and/or restoring sufficient natural habitat, ranging from Canada to Mexico, to support a continental population of 62 million breeding ducks (by contrast, the 1990 population was 31 million breeders!) and an annual Fall Flight of at least 100 million birds by the year 2000.

The originators of the NAWMP envisioned

Both resident and migratory species abound at Price Lake, such as the majestic pelican, one of the larger birds commonly seen in the area. At right, Research Director at Rockefeller Refuge, Ted Joanen, confers with biologist Dave Richard, project coordinator for the Price Lake Project.



a cooperative effort involving the Canadian government, the governments of the Canadian provinces, the U.S. Government and the various states. Ducks Unlimited was, of course, on board from the very beginning. There was to be a concerted effort to secure support from sportsmen's organizations, environmentalists and other conservation groups.

Of particular importance was the potential cooperation of private landowners, since the great majority of land, including waterfowl habitat, is privately owned, and the support of major corporations.

No one was quite prepared for the enthusiastic cooperation that sprang from the grass roots of Louisiana and the rest of the nation. The initial two years of the program was given over to planning. Priorities were to be established and both general and specific projects put on paper. But even before that could be accomplished, landowners were stepping forward as a major factor in the NAWMP.

Mrs. Verga Mouton was the first to enroll property in the program. Six hundred and forty acres of her Kaplan rice farm became a privately-owned waterfowl refuge, administered as part of the national wildlife refuge system. Other property owners quickly followed. Among the latest additions, the Allen Ranch in Lafourche Parish added 12,000 acres to the total. And Mrs. Floy McElroy contributed an outright donation of 680 acres in Richland Parish. Including both private refuges and acquisitions by governmental agencies, available waterfowl sanctuaries in Louisiana have grown by some 61,000 acres in less than four years.

Large commercial companies such as Miami Land Corporation have made thousands of additional acres available for intensive management and habitat enhancement.

Of equal importance has been the voluntary involvement of major industrial corporations such as Amoco, Texaco, Chevron, International Paper Company and Dow Chemical.

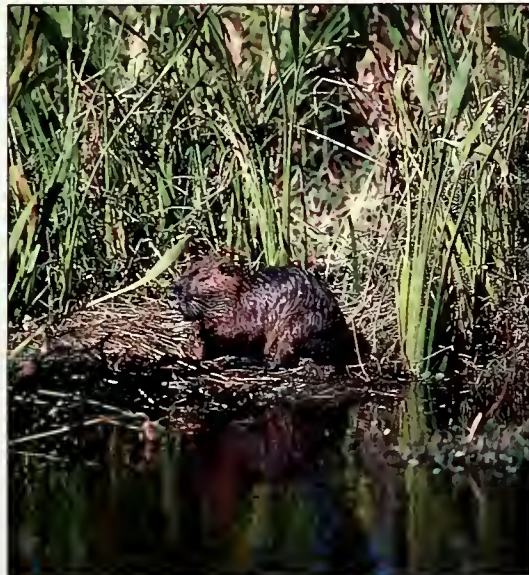
The result has been a mushrooming effort toward habitat enhancement and preservation that has outdistanced the planners and record keepers who are just now beginning to catch up. At this point, no one can accurately say how many acres of Louisiana land are under the auspices of the NAWMP, but a look at figures for the 1990 fiscal year alone reveal more than 216 thousand acres of habitat created, restored or enhanced for the benefit of waterfowl.

Efforts are now underway to consolidate figures for all NAWMP projects on all public, corporate and private land in Louisiana. The total is bound to be impressive.

Still, it will not be enough to meet the ultimate goal of the plan, which envisions the protection and enhancement of nearly six million acres of waterfowl habitat throughout the North American Continent. Nor will it contain a viable answer to the long-term problem of habitat conversion and destruction. Most importantly, it will not contain a solution to the ominous problem of our disappearing coastal marshes.

But if a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, we have certainly taken that first step. Now we must not falter nor fall by the way. It is clear that the North American Waterfowl Management Plan can work. It is now up to all of us to make it work. □

The Price Lake Marsh Restoration Project is an outstanding example of the cooperative efforts of state and federal government agencies, as well as private organizations and individuals, under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.



Above, a Wildlife and Fisheries photographer studies the view from the newly-constructed observations platform at Price Lake. Fur bearing animals like the nutria at left, and the alligators which they feed, thrive in a healthy wetland environment such as that being preserved at Rockefeller Refuge.



Poets have praised fishing as a soothing balm that can massage away life's worries, sending an angler home from the field refreshed and re-energized. The poets never met a yellowfin tuna.

With Yellowfin You're In for a Fight!

BY BOB MARSHALL

Only 25 minutes had passed since the fish struck, but Buell Polk's perception of sportfishing has changed forever. The notion of fun had faded. Survival was the goal now. Nothing he had hooked in a life of angling—not the 25-pound redfish or the 60-pound rainbows—had prepared him for what was on the other end of the line eight miles south of the mouth of the Mississippi River. He had heard stories about yellowfin tuna, but he hadn't believed them. Until now.

Now he was straining with his legs to keep from being hauled over the transom of the charter boat Teaser. His arms were burning, his back was screaming, and the line still was running off the reel.

And that's when Buell Polk threw in the towel. He motioned to "big brother" J.D. (5-foot-

11, about 200 pounds) to step closer, then handed him the rod.

"I wasn't sure who had who, and I wasn't taking any chances," Buell said. "That was unlike anything I ever imagined."

Forty-five minutes later, J.D. finally brought a 165-pound yellowfin to the gaff.

"Tag teams aren't unusual when we're into yellowfins," charter skipper Mike Frenette smiled. "I had one 150-pounder go through three fishermen. I finally had to finish it up.

"They're unbelievable. They'll punish your body."

Recreational fishing is supposed to be fun, relaxing. Poets have praised it as a soothing balm that can message away life's worries, sending an angler home from the field refreshed and re-energized.

The poets never met a yellowfin tuna.

Hooking up with a yellowfin is like stepping into the ring with Mike Tyson. There is nothing delicate or lyrical about the experience. It's an old-fashioned, bare-knuckle fight, a pure and simple contest of strength and muscle in which combatants keep slugging until one cries uncle. With yellowfin it often is not the fish.

Yellowfins have a way of making rods and reels irrelevant, working straight through the tackle to melt the man.

"When you first hook one you're really stunned by the power and the runs," said Metairie angler Keith Dering, a yellowfin survivor. "But after a while you get concerned, because it just doesn't stop. It's a battle the whole way.

"I caught one over 150 pounds that took me an hour and a half to get in. I was pretty beat up after that. It's fun, because of the challenge. But it isn't very pretty."

Yellowfin shred much of the romanticism from angling. Trout, with their whippet-like bodies and often dazzling colors can be beautiful. Even deep-sea giants such as marlin can evoke images of Rudolf Nureyev as they dance through the air in graceful leaps.

Not tuna. Nature designed them with the functional beauty of a rifleslug—hollow-point variety. A sharply tapered snout helps pierce the water; a short, thin, forked tail provides guidance. Everything in between is muscle.

That combination is an adaptation for the tuna's niche in the marine environment. Tuna are predators, constantly moving, constantly eating, roaming deep regions of the world's temperate oceans in a non-stop run to the dinner table. They don't even pause to spawn,

releasing eggs on the go over a period of months from spring through summer.

Atlantic yellowfin seem to migrate in a circular path across the ocean. Fish tagged in the Gulf of Mexico have been taken off the west coast of Africa. The migrations appear spurred by water temperatures and the availability of food. Yellowfin prefer temperatures below 80 degrees, and feed on squid, small jacks and crustaceans. They eat plenty and grow fast; a yearling reaches 20 inches, a seven-year-old can be 70 inches. A 60-pound yellowfin is considered small; the state record is 221 pounds 8 ounces, while the world record is a hard to imagine 388-12 taken off the west coast of Mexico.

They are colorful brutes. Fresh out of the water, a yellowfin has a deep blue-black back that fades to silver on its sides and belly. The fins are yellow with black edges. A golden-yellow stripe often runs down the side from eye to tail, and rows of white spots stretch from the back to the belly.

The great color is matched by the great flavor of its flesh. Gourmands claim it has no rival fresh off the grill.

That combination of great fun and flavor make it a natural for Louisiana sportsmen, a group that can never decide if it fishes for fun or food.

"I'm not sure I'd go through this if it wasn't such a great eating fish," Dering said.

Until the last five years, few state anglers had the choice. Yellowfin prefer deep water, usually staying around the 100-fathom curve, a 30-mile run from most coastal marinas. That once was the sole province of big-game fishermen in floating yachts. But a changing in-

Fishing for yellowfin tuna takes determination, strength and stamina. Frequently the fish will exhaust two or more rod welders, so it's wise to take along a husky friend.



In past years, it took a yacht to go after yellowfin tuna in deep waters. Now the fish are close at hand at the mouth of the Mississippi, and sleek new craft put you in range.



shore fishery and the development of fast, safe coastal hulls helped turned anglers' eyes south.

In southeastern Louisiana, the opening of a recreational marina at Venice provided an ideal jumping-off spot to the tuna grounds. Anglers could motor 20 miles of the 30-mile run in the safety of the Mississippi River. Suddenly, tuna were close at hand.

Recreationals were not the only fishermen to discover the yellowfin off Louisiana's coast. A commercial longline fishery that didn't exist five years ago has exploded into prominence in the last three years, taking more than 28 million pounds of fish. Concerns by state and federal agencies that overfishing could result seemed to be supported by a fall in landings and average size of fish last year.

Congress reacted by bringing tuna under the Magnuson Fisheries Conservation Act last year, a move supported by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and most conservation groups. But there is some dispute over how effective that move will turn out to be. Language in the act directs the Secretary of Commerce to allow commercial tuna fishermen "a reasonable opportunity" to reach quotas set by international agreement. Therefore the

Secretary may not be able to institute more conservative regulations, even if science indicates the need. Currently, there is a seven-pound size minimum on yellowfins that may be taken.

Frenette, who likes chasing big fish with medium and light tackle, has specialized in tuna for five years, discovering facts he doesn't mind sharing with other fishermen.

"During the late summer and through the fall, several things happen that seem to bring tuna in as close as four miles from South Pass," Frenette said. "The water temperature starts to drop, blue water moves in close, and the big migration of mullet heads out of the river into the Gulf.

"I think the tuna start feeding on those mullet and start following them in closer to the marsh than normal."

Finding tuna in the fall and winter normally isn't difficult. As soon as Frenette clears the jetties at the mouth of the river, he begins scouting the Gulf for "tuna sign."

"I'm looking for any kind of action on the surface," Frenette explained. "Usually it'll be just past a color change from green to blue green, but not always. What happens is the tuna push those bait fish to the surface. If you

see hardtails, mullet or bonita scattering, there's a good chance it's because yellowfins are under them moving them around, especially this time of the year."

Sometimes the big fish will show themselves, launching their thick bodies out of the water. Other times an entire school will follow a cloud of baitfish to the surface, thrashing the top for a minute or more. Usually, they remain deeper.

"Tuna are very, very temperature sensitive," Frenette pointed out. "They like to stay deep, usually 30 to 60 feet down. When they come to the surface, they normally only stay a short while."

Like a growing number of sportsmen, Frenette spurns the heavy tackle once favored for tuna. Instead he uses stand-up graphite tuna rods with medium-action saltwater casting reels. Line is 30- to 50-pound test, and the leader is a 130-pound test metal wire.

"The leader is critical," he said. "For some reason, monofilament leaders tend to foul the tuna lures."

Casting baits into surface-feeding yellowfin is a thrilling but rare experience. More often anglers use surface sightings as markers for good trolling spots. The favored baits are Magnum Rapalas, Tuna Clones and Soft Heads. Frenette often will use downriggers to get the baits to the fish, sometimes 70 feet deep.

A tuna strike can be totally blind; one of the rods will suddenly bend toward the Gulf. Or it can be heart-stopping: A tuna will suddenly power to the surface and crash onto a bait.

The result always is the same: The reel literally screams as the line vanishes in seconds. Runs of 150- to 200-yards are common for tuna over 60 pounds; a 150-pound tuna can take 500 yards in a single effort.

"There's a reason these reels carry 600 to 650 yards of line," Frenette smiled.

The first run is just the beginning. Tuna usually head for the bottom, then try circling the boat. Anglers can be dragged and yanked from stern to transom a dozen times before the issue is settled—or before they give up.

"The important thing to remember when you're fighting yellowfin is patience," Frenette said. "You can't horse 'em in."

"Pound for pound, they're the strongest fish we can find out there. You've got to have some stamina and hope the gear holds up."

"There are some guys who don't want anything to do with yellowfin after their first trip. But most guys just get the bug and want to try more." □



Hooking a big one is only the beginning--you may face a battle of an hour or more before you land it. But the prize is definitely worth the pain. The current Louisiana record for yellowfin is 221 pounds 8 ounces.



"We were camped in the Pass-a-Loutre Wildlife Management Area at the very mouth of the Mississippi River. The possibilities were positively bewildering: a veritable buffet of outdoor delights. We could always fish. And hey, we could hunt."

A Sportsman in Paradise

BY HUMBERTO FONTOVA

A

re those teal, or shorebirds?" "They're teal, man, TEAL! And they're coming!" My brother was right. About 40 teal in one wheeling, buzzing mass had seen our decoys and were boring straight in. Shooting—fast frantic shooting—was seconds away. Then why did Rick suddenly look off to my left, away from the teal?

I felt an elbow in my ribs, "On the left...pintail." Ah yes, six drakes had locked up and were gliding in. Here was a study in contrasts, and a most delicious dilemma. On the right, a mass of nervous little buzzbombs that could mean a limit with two shots. On the left, the aristocrats of the duck clan; sleek and elegant. Next to these guys, mallards are chubby, clumsy oafs. Teal, a bunch of overgrown snipe. And dos gris...let's not even mention them in the same article.

Nothing gaudy on a pintail. Nothing tacky. Let the woodducks flap around like some garish

neon sign. Let the mallards cruise the potholes in their green and white polyester disco suits. The pintail outclasses them all with his tailored mahogany and white tux.

"Let's pass on the teal," I whispered right before they swept over at hat level. "There will be more."

I can't believe it. The pintail are actually going to land. No not quite. Raising their wings against the wind they're out of range in seconds.

"Why didn't you shoot?" my brother asks.

"Why didn't you?" I counter.

"I don't know. I guess we took enough pintail when they were 10-point ducks."

"Yeah, I guess I was thinking the same thing. Pintail are hurting. I read somewhere that numbers are something like 50 percent below the 30-year average. These mud flats wouldn't be the same without them. Besides, it's only 7:15. Let's wait for some greys." Share a duck blind with someone for enough years and you start thinking alike.

It took all of 10 minutes for the greys to show up. A pair passed over at about 200 yards, cupped at the first highball, made one long curving descent while we chuckled on the calls, and crumpled as our two shots rang out as one.

"All right, what now?" quipped Rick. "Looks like Dad and Fred limited out too. See 'em picking up the decoys over by those willows? Yeah, let's pick up and head back to the tent. We'll discuss it there."

We were camped out on a spoil bank in the Pass-a-Loutre Wildlife Management Area at the very mouth of the Mississippi River. The possibilities for the rest of the day were positively bewildering: a veritable buffet of outdoor delights.

We could always fish. But what kind? Fresh or salt water? And what kind of salt water? The South Pass jetties for bull reds? Or the rousseaus at the mouth of the smaller passes for rat reds and trout? The deeper freshwater ponds and canals for bass? Or the main passes for stripers and catfish?

And hey, we could hunt. But what kind? Do we kick up marsh rabbits, or go for snipe? Stand hunt the ridges for deer? Or stake out along South Pass for geese? Do we... Look, I could fill up three more pages with possibilities at this place. But I think you get the picture.

This place is an outdoorsman's paradise.

The weather decided for us. It was warm and bluebird. No weather for geese, or for

tromping around kicking up snipe and rabbits. But perfect for fishing. After a 45-minute council over sausage, eggs and coffee, we decided on the mouth of Johnson Pass for reds and trout. And we weren't disappointed.

Nothing fancy here. We used the classics: shrimp-tipped shad rigs and beetles, three feet below popping corks, cast to the edge of the rousseaus. It took about five minutes for the reels to start singing and for four lunatics to start whooping. And about two hours for a four-man limit of reds and smattering of chunky trout.

At 4:30 that afternoon while everyone else was collecting driftwood for the fire, I was leaning against a willow on a spoil bank, face net on and bow in hand.

I caught movement through the brush. "Another bird," I'm thinking. More movement behind it. "Wait a minute... Is that an ear twitching? It is! She's looking straight at me. Now she's bobbing her head. Now she's stomping the ground. What's that? Two more behind her! They probably see me shaking. They're moving now! I can't find an opening through the brush. I can't even hold the bow steady!"

Too late. Three does ambled through the thick brush at no more than 20 yards. The adrenalin that coursed through my veins during those five minutes when they were in view had me convulsed in giddy tremors for 15 minutes after the episode. And that night as I stared into the campfire feeling elated, content and dog-tired, I couldn't shake the image of those deer from my head, except when that of a cupping pintail, skyrocketing teal or swirling redfish intervened. All in all, quite a panorama. And quite a weekend.

Simply put, for a sportsman willing to put in the effort, there's no place like the Delta. Fresh marshes, brackish marshes, high ground with towering willows, baccharis-shrubbed spoil banks—each type of terrain holds something of interest for the sportsman in winter. And at Pass-a-Loutre you'll find them all.

Hundreds of thousands of ducks descend on the roughly 200,000-acre Mississippi Delta each fall and winter. Here the continent's superhighway for migrating ducks dead-ends. Per acre, this is one of

Fishermen can have a field day at Pass-a-Loutre. Here, the author (left) handles a newly caught redfish while his companion inspects a speckled trout.



the biggest concentration of wintering ducks on the continent. Pass-A-Loutre WMA spans 66,000 acres smack in the middle of this duck resort.

But a limit here is earned, my friend. Don't be fooled by the multitudes of ducks. Sure, it means more ducks to hunt but it also means rafts of them to compete against with your decoys and calling.

Tides fluctuate up to two feet per day in the Delta. The best—and sometimes the only—duck shooting in the Delta comes on the high tide. Even if it's mid-day. Yes, you heard right—the HIGH tide. And not just because of access.

Mike Windham, Wildlife and Fisheries biologist at Pass-a-Loutre WMA, explains: "The prime duck food in this marsh is Delta duck potato and freshwater three-square grass. The high tide covers the mudflats where these grow with a few inches of water, creating the perfect depth for dabbling ducks to feed in. So this is when they start flying to the feeding areas. Ducks are present on the WMA during low tidal cycles but tend to be in inaccessible areas and concentrate in areas where construction of blinds would be difficult."

While waiting for the tide to come up, you might consider deer hunting. This is strictly bowhunting, and it lasts from Oct. 1 to the end of duck season. This, however, is not typical deer hunting terrain. No acorn-littered ridges. No slender pines or oaks for the climbing stand. No trails for the three-wheelers. But plenty of deer. In fact, a bowhunter has a better chance at a deer on these spoil

banks than almost any place else in Louisiana, a better chance than almost any place in the south.

I think I hear scoffing.

Okay, let's look at the statistics. The average for either-sex gun-hunting in Louisiana's WMAs is about 16 hunter-efforts per deer. Even a deer factory like Alabama records 35 bowhunting efforts per deer on its WMAs. Last year in Pass-a-Loutre it was one deer per 15 bowhunting efforts.

According to Emile Leblanc, area supervisor, most of the deer are killed on the spoil banks between South Pass and Southeast Pass by hunters using ladder stands. A few hunt on the ground. These deer feed mostly on baccharis and willow, especially the young willow that sprouts up on the sandbars. To scout, start by checking for trails leading to these areas.

Late winter is also the best time for dogless rabbit hunting along the high ground bordering South Pass. The brush is down and the visibility and shooting easier. When a rabbit shoots out under your feet it's easy to forget everything but aiming and shooting. So if you're hunting in a group, wear orange caps for safety. This isn't the law, just good sense.

The fishing in this area depends almost entirely on river levels. When it's low and green, Head of Passes, and most of the spillways along South Pass offer up a mixed bag of redfish, trout and stripers. Here, green beetles and cohahoes tipped with shrimp and bounced along the bottom on a falling tide work best.

If the river's up and dirty, consider the rock

Besides both fresh and salt water fishing, Pass-a-Loutre offers rich opportunities for the duck hunter. The 66,000-acre WMA sits in the midst of a region that attracts hundreds of thousands of migrating waterfowl each season.



jetties at the mouth of South Pass with the same jigs but with slightly heavier tackle.

Redfish from five to 20 pounds are the norm here. Huge speckled and white trout also show up. Depending on currents, you might also consider a heavier jig-head to get the bait to the bottom. Usually clean calm water lies below the current and murk you see on the surface.

For bass on a high river level try the deeper, clearer ponds and pipelines and canals. Sawdust Bend Bayou and the ponds between South Pass and Cadro Pass usually produce.

For traditional redfishing (popping cork cast to the edge of the grass) try the mouths of all the smaller passes from Redfish Bay around to South Pass. Only here you'll be casting to the edge of rousseau cane rather than oyster grass. Even with a strong north front pushing through, the tall rousseau cane gives good shelter for fishing in this area.

The LDWF brochure states that "primitive" camping is available on the Pass-A-Loutre WMA. Primitive is an understatement. Neanderthal man had it better than this. At least he had caves. Here you get a lump of rivers and covered with brush.

Shove your way in, clear the brush, drive out the nutria and raccoons and set up camp. And speaking of Neanderthal man, look in the mirror after one of these trips and you'll find something pretty close.

The look on the faces of your spouse and kids when you get home from one of these trips says it all. As they flee in panic, try to catch up with them and explain that no, the

Wild Man from Borneo isn't chasing them. No, you're not auditioning for a part in "Quest for Fire II." It's just the effects of three days on a "primitive" campout.

Don't go down there expecting running water, RV hookups and bathrooms. Look at a map and you'll see why. The closest road stops 12 miles from its borders. Access is by boat (17-foot at least) down the Mississippi River dodging crewboats and supertankers and wallowing through their mountainous swells.

You'll probably want to leave on a Friday to scout, but the formula is simple: Launch at Venice Marina at the end of Highway 23, head downriver 10 miles, turn left at Pass-a-Loutre and forget civilization for a few days. □



You can go bowhunting for deer and rabbit hunting, too, at the Pass-a-Loutre WMA on the very same day that you go duck hunting and fishing, if you're so inclined. Anyway, it's a real outdoorsman's paradise!



VISIONS FOR THE '90s:

Operation Game Thief

BY CHARLES W. WIGGINS SR.

Louisiana Operation Game Thief has many successes to its credit in helping bring poachers to justice. Now, as explained by the author who was president of OGT in 1990, the program has established a broader vision for the 1990s. The new goals center around the motto that, for Louisiana residents to enjoy the long-term benefits of our bountiful wildlife, we must not only react defensively against poaching and other forms of wildlife violations, but we must teach our children the merits of conservation, hunter ethics and self-restraint.

In 1984, concerned sportsmen from throughout Louisiana gathered in Baton Rouge to discuss plans for forming Louisiana's first crime-stoppers program for wildlife violations — Louisiana Operation Game Thief, Inc. Their plans, along with a measurable degree of enthusiasm and persistence, paid off in the formation of a non-profit corporation which has developed into one of the country's foremost programs of its kind. In fact, Louisiana OGT surpasses the national average in the number of arrests made per call received. Receiving more than \$87,000 in contributions and paying out more than \$53,000 in rewards, the program has resulted in the apprehension of more than 506 subjects since its inception just six years ago.

The program has resulted in tips that led to several of the largest cases in the history of Louisiana wildlife law enforcement. Two of the most notable cases involved alleged commercial sale of wildlife on a grand scale. Undeniably, it is a program that merits the support of every sportsman in the state, both financially and through individual participation.

OGT is funded entirely by voluntary contributions, directed and governed by private citizens, and operated in close cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Capt. Keith LaCaze serves as the department's coordinator for the program. Anyone with knowledge of hunting or fishing violations to report may phone the OGT toll-free hotline 24 hours a day at 1-800-442-2511.

Persons witnessing or having reason to suspect illegal activities involving wildlife, should obtain all the detailed information possible—such as names, description, license numbers and the precise location of the suspected crime. They should then phone-in the information promptly. Agents will be dispatched to investigate the situation.

Calls resulting in the arrest of a suspect qualify the person providing the information for a reward, the size of which depends upon the seriousness of the violation. For example, cases involving big game, endangered species or the illegal sale of game qualify for a \$300 minimum reward. Other minimums apply to various classes of violations.

Informants should remember that they may remain totally anonymous. The phone operator will assign a code number for later identification. The payment of any rewards will

then be handled discreetly so as not to reveal the informant's identity.

With many successes to its credit, OGT has established a broader vision for the 1990s. For if we are to enjoy long-term success, we must not only react defensively against poaching and other forms of wildlife violations, we must be proactive by teaching our children the merits of conservation, hunter ethics and self-restraint. Consequently, OGT established and adopted three interlocking goals for the 1990s:

1. Expand OGT's role in education. Our real future is in changing the views and attitudes of future sportsmen. Accordingly, we must direct our attention to education while maintaining our reactive reward program. OGT will seek to assemble or sponsor a program of formal educational materials for Louisiana school children, hopefully in close cooperation with other existing or future programs, such as Project WILD.

2. Increase citizen participation. Citizen participation is a crucial element to the overall success of OGT. In spite of the program's existence for six years, many Louisiana citizens remain unaware of its existence or purpose. This must be corrected by a more aggressive news and public relations effort.

3. Expand sportsman involvement in the program. Currently, the program is almost totally reliant on volunteer resources. OGT's officers and directors receive no compensation, nor do they accept reimbursement for their expenses. Additional participation is vital not only to the development of new ideas, but to the maintenance of the momentum the program has gained. OGT will seek to gain active support from a wider base of sportsmen.

Attainment of these goals will certainly stretch the financial resources of the organization. Much of the volunteer resources in the past has been directed at fund-raising. To meet these challenging goals and direct more energy at education, OGT will launch a major fund-raising campaign in 1991. A goal of \$1 million over the next three years has been set. This should provide ample resources for financing the organization's activities and secure its long-term future.

Many may find such a goal unrealistic, particularly in our economic times. But as OGT's president, I feel that packaged properly, our offer will be hard to refuse. Targeted for participation will be those who earn their

livelihood from recreational activities and major corporate residents of Louisiana. Spread across the wide base of licensed Louisiana hunters and fishermen (approximately 856,000 licenses sold in 1989), the per capita burden becomes quite reasonable. The payoff for Louisiana sportsmen will be tremendous.

Unlike many fund raising programs where the donor is never fully aware of how his or her money is being spent, OGT's plan will provide a high degree of comfort to the donor. Funds raised will be invested in a legally protected endowment fund. Only specified portions of the principal will be expendable (such as to offset the cost of fund-raising). The remainder will continue to be legally protected for perpetuity. Only the investment earnings may be used by the organization. The endowment document will further specify the purposes for which the earnings may be used.

The specific details of the campaign will be one of the major items of business at OGT's annual meeting in January. If the campaign is a success, OGT's longer range plans include the possibility of hiring an executive director to spearhead the expansion of the organization's involvement in educational pursuits and citizen involvement. Volunteer resources are not sufficient to sustain the growth the organization has planned for the 1990s. Our desire is that more sportsmen will join with us and be an active part of our success.

Serving as officers in 1990 were Charles E. Wiggins Sr. of Shreveport, president; the late Jack Pabody of Shreveport, vice-president; Robert Dugal of New Iberia, secretary; and Bill Chapman of Sulphur, treasurer. In addition, OGT is served by 11 directors, one from each of the Department's eight districts, as well as three directors at-large.

A citizens advisory committee of up to 35 individuals deliberates on the awarding of rewards. The committee meets once each quarter, three meetings at the Wildlife and Fisheries offices in Tioga and once at the annual meeting which occurs the last Saturday in January each year at the Department's headquarters in Baton Rouge. Persons interested in actively participating in any capacity are welcome to attend any meeting. To inquire further, they may contact any of the officers or OGT coordinator Capt. Keith LaCaze at the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries in Baton Rouge.

One person does make a difference. Here's what you can do:

1. Participate at one or more levels on an active basis. Meetings are held quarterly. Phone any OGT officer or contact the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Tell a friend about the program.

2. If you are aware of a game law violation, phone the OGT hotline at 1-800-442-2511. The call is free and you may be eligible for a cash reward. Be sure to have as much detailed information as possible. Remember, it is not necessary for you to reveal your identity.

3. To insure the continued success of the program, make your contribution to the OGT reward fund. All contributions are tax deductible. Send your check to: Louisiana Operation Game Thief, Inc., P.O. Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000.

4. Urge your hunting, fishing or shooting club to learn more about the program and how they might support it. Promotional materials are available at no charge to interested persons or programs. □

Louisiana OGT, the state's first crime-stoppers program for wildlife violations, surpasses the national average in the number of arrests made per call received. One such call on OGT's 24-hour hotline led to the arrest of a violator attempting to illegally sell the load of redfish below.



Operation Game Thief





TEACH HUNTER ETHICS

...our tomorrows depend on it!

Get that game thief! Report poaching and vandalism against wildlife. Call: 1-800-442-2511

Support this citizen's campaign with a tax-deductible gift: Operation Game Thief, c/o Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, P.O. Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000



When Poaching Was a Way of Life

BY GENE NACCARI

If I confess that I was once a poacher before I reached my teens, then you must let me explain how this came about.

My paternal grandparents came from the Gulf of Mexico barrier island, Grand Isle, Louisiana. My Mamere was Cajun French on both sides and felt more comfortable speaking in Cajun French. My Papere was the son of an Italian immigrant who became Cajunized when he married a French girl and ended up making his living on Grand Isle, mostly as a fisherman. So my Papere, for all practical purposes, was a Cajun Italian whose first language was French but who felt comfortable speaking English.

Living on Grand Isle at that time, in the 1800s and the early 1900s, meant you had access to many of nature's bounties, and feeding your family came easy if you were willing to work for it. Fishing and shrimp-ing offered what seemed to be limitless catches. There were no shortages, no threatened or endangered species. And if your property touched the sound side of this barrier island, you could cultivate your own oyster beds in these quiet waters.

Game birds were always around and available for the hunting. At least some species of wild birds were present at any time of the year, and for most of these years there were no hunting seasons. Why have hunting seasons? The supply of game seemed inexhaustible. And, even when times started to change and hunting seasons were established, many Cajuns felt that the new rules did not apply to the local people.

Even firewood came easily and at no cost—you simply sent some family members out to comb the beaches for driftwood. The frost-free days each year numbered at least 300, so nature even cooperated in this way to make vegetable gardening possible on just about a year-round basis. Nature was kind to these Cajuns plus a few other ethnic groups lucky enough to live in this food-plentiful paradise. If you wanted food, you would go get it.

Then disaster struck in paradise. The hurricane of 1893 devastated Grand Isle and all the residents' homes. My Mamere, after spend-

ing the night in a tree with her husband and three small children, never wanted to live there again, so my grandparents settled in the more inland Bayou Barataria country.

Despite the slightly mixed lineage of my Papere, both of my grandparents were typically Cajun, with all the traditions and attitudes that went with such people. Being their grandson, naturally I had to learn to hunt, so at age 6 I hunted with my BB gun, and at age 11 I already had my own shotgun. And so these circumstances led up to me being a sub-teen poacher.

Being a Cajun meant that you ate a lot of game, so you were getting to be a man if you could bring something home for the table. And, of course, my Cajun-oriented grandparents wanted me to be a man, to be mature and

self-reliant. So I was encouraged or at least allowed to hunt game even though it was the summer time. Now, you will say that you don't hunt birds, rabbit, squirrel, etc., in the summer time, and you will be correct—the hunting season is closed then.

But, of course, you are talking about now, the 90s, and I am talking about the attitude and traditions of Cajun hunters back in the 30s. Sure, there were fixed hunting seasons even then that occurred mostly in early fall until late winter, and you were supposed to live up to this schedule. But, in the minds of many Cajun people at that time, this hunting season foolishness was not for them. This was their land and their game. You also usually knew the "game warden" personally, and, besides, the supply of game for most species seemed unlimited. There was no danger — so you thought — of wiping out certain species.

But let Louisiana city-folks or out-of-state hunters show up out of season, and that was an offense for the game warden to act on. In fact, the locals even resented it when outsiders showed up for hunting in season, unless they paid you to hunt or guide them on your land. Now that was different!

So I would take my shotgun out into the fields, woods or swamps and hope to come back with game for the table. Usually I didn't, but a little success kept you going. And that made me ready to hunt at a moment's notice.



Game populations once seemed inexhaustible, and many Louisianans felt that they could make their own rules for hunting and fishing. But one boy underwent a change of heart when he encountered a majestic grosbec like the one at left.

That's why I found myself reacting quickly when that grosbec (yellow-crowned night heron) landed in a tree down our shell road. I was immediately asking my Papere if I could go get him.

"Kuup, kuup," called the grosbec, trying to keep in touch with his fellow-traveling grosbec. "Kuup, kuup."

"Please, Papere, can I go get him? Please?" I pleaded.

Now my Papere probably knew that the grosbec had been taken off the eligible game bird list since about 1918, but it was the 30s, it was Cajun country, a boy had to grow up, and, besides, the game warden was my Papere's nephew. "Go get him, son," he said with a smile. And, so I went down the shell



Now retired, author Gene Naccari, 70, works as a volunteer plant landscaper at the Louisiana Nature and Science Center in New Orleans. He points out that today's youngsters, like those below, now receive a solid grounding in firearms use and hunter ethics before going out in the field.



road, being careful to quieten the crunch my bare feet made on the loose clam shells.

As I crept closer, an almost-setting sun was at my back as I looked toward the grosbec. You don't see sunsets like that anymore. The sun was setting in a perfectly clear sky. There was no haze on the horizon for the sun to dip into as we have learned to expect at the end of the 20th century. So the sunlight was not reddish or rose colored, it was pure golden-yellow, lighting up without distortion the plumage of the grosbec. This game will be bigger and prettier, I thought, than my usual redwings or grackles. It was more desirable than they were. Papere would be proud of me.

I had now crept as close as I dared. It was a slightly long-range shot, but I was confident that the bird was about to be mine. I aimed carefully and pulled the trigger.

"Bang," went the shotgun. "Kuup," went the grosbec as it flew away. I had missed, and the grosbec was on its way — out of sight. "Kuup, kuup."

I walked slowly back to my Papere with a dejected look on my face and with no more confidence in my heart. I was a failure.

But, now in the 90s, with the advantage of hindsight, I am glad that I missed that grosbec that evening long ago. It kept me from being a successful sub-teen poacher, and I am glad for that...Too many species of wildlife are endangered these days, and I hope that our attitude toward the problem will change soon enough to save them from extinction.

Nowadays, this true story of a sub-teen poacher probably wouldn't happen. We are exposed to so much good, sound environmental education, it just couldn't happen to people with good intentions.

Today all is not perfect, but even former poachers have a new attitude toward poaching and other adverse environmental conditions that influence the survival of our wildlife. Attitudes of hunters are changing — they now say they wish funds would permit more wildlife agents in the field.

And the game wardens of yesterday are no comparison to the highly trained and motivated wildlife agents which enforce Louisiana's wildlife laws today.

Also, to promote better understanding of our environmental problems, proper hunter behavior, etc., the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries offers educational programs for young, would-be hunters, as well as all other lovers of the outdoors. □



By promoting management of valuable forest resources that will assure their continued survival for future generations, the Louisiana Forest Stewardship Program hopes to help private landowners come up with multiple-use programs suited for individual properties. Free technical assistance will be provided the landowners from professional wildlife biologists and foresters to achieve this common goal of long-term stewardship of Louisiana's forestlands.

NEW HELP FOR OUR FORESTS

The Louisiana Forest Stewardship Program is a new venture to promote wise use and management of natural resources to maintain and enhance the value of the forests for present and future generations.

The program will provide a means for state, federal and private agencies to better coordinate their services to the

private non-industrial forest landowners with a common goal of long-term stewardship of forestlands in Louisiana. Free technical assistance will be provided to the landowner from the agencies' staffs of professional wildlife biologists and foresters.

The program is open to any private forest landowner who has 10 acres of forestland and wants to manage the land for its many resources: timber, wildlife, recreation, aesthetics, environment and livestock.

Targeted landowners are those who are not currently managing their lands according to a written multiple-use management plan; who have managed exclusively for a single resource and wish to diversify their activities; and those who presently manage their properties according to the stewardship concept and deserve the recognition for their efforts.

For participating landowners, the program would:

- Encourage wildlife and biological diversity through habitat protection and improvement.
- Provide recreational opportunities.
- Improve income opportunities through better land management.
- Ensure future supply of timber for forest products.
- Guard against soil erosion and protect air and water quality.
- Conserve water and soil resources for now and the future.
- Protect wetlands.
- Maintain unique historical and geological features.
- Maintain and enhance the beauty of Louisiana's forests.

For more information or how to apply for the program, contact Kenny Ribbeck, Stewardship Coordinator, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, P.O. Box 278, Tioga, LA 71477, (318) 487-5885, or Pat Beard, State Stewardship Coordinator, Louisiana Office of Forestry, P.O. Box 1628, Baton Rouge, LA 70821, (504) 925-4500. □



Fran Holman Johnson, who teaches English at Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, is the author of "The Gift of the Wild Things": The Life of Caroline Dormon. The biography is published by the Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Southwestern Louisiana, P.O. Box 40831, Lafayette, LA 70504-0831. It is priced at \$10.95.

CARRIE DORMON

CONSERVATION'S GREAT PIONEER

BY FRAN HOLMAN JOHNSON

We are preparing now the heritage of those who will come after us. To us was given the splendid beauty of hill, forest, and stream—in what condition are we going to pass it on? They'll judge us, those inheritors!...At last when the natural beauty of our landscape is all but lost, the awakening is coming—realization of the necessity for preserving its loveliness." This most modern plea was actually written in 1927 by the pioneering naturalist Caroline Dormon. Dormon's impassioned pleas were concretized by her untiring service to conservation efforts. She decried heedless waste and ruin of any element of nature, and she developed countless plans for preserving the elements of nature.

Caroline gained an appreciation of nature from her parents: "We lived at Arcadia...Woods were nearby, and my brothers and I knew every inch of them. We knew exactly where the first wild plums, redbud, and violets bloomed; we climbed the tallest trees to see what sort of eggs oriole, vireo, and gnat-catcher laid, and just how they built their nests. Even as tiny things, we never destroyed bird nests—not by any means because we were so good (we were 'those wild Dormon children!') but simply because our father had taught us how interesting it was to watch and study bird-life.

"And it was at Arcadia that both my father and mother went with us to the woods every Sunday afternoon, and explored nature with us. And on rare occasions, my father slipped away

from a very busy life, and just he and I went fishing...it was on these occasions that I learned the names of many flowers, birds, and trees. He was never in too much of a hurry (he must not have caught many fish) to stop and look at something new I had found."

This initial introduction to nature was reinforced in the Dormon children by the family visits to their summer home in Natchitoches Parish. In fact, Caroline was born at Briarwood during summer vacation on July 19, 1888. "It happened that I was born down there one summer, and was highly pleased with myself therefor!"

The family trips to Briarwood not only provided delight—"it was like going to heaven!"—but also the trips fostered in Caroline a desire to save the longleaf pines she saw "being slaughtered" and inspired in her the dream of preserving a tract of virgin forest land.

After graduating from The Judson, a private college in Alabama, and after a brief teaching career, Dormon was hired in 1921 by the Louisiana forestry division. (Dormon was the first woman to be so hired in the state and is commonly considered the first woman to be hired in forestry in the nation as well.)

This employment and recognition had been earned. Caroline had at her own expense attended the Southern Forestry Congress in New Orleans in 1920 in order to plant the seeds for her dream of a national forest in Louisiana; she had worked as the head of the Forestry Division of the Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs to gather support for a national forest in Louisiana; and she had explored the Kisatchie area to determine ownership of the desirable tracts.

In addition to continuing her work to secure a national forest for Louisiana, Caroline was simultaneously breaking new ground as Louisiana's first conservation educator. She personally visited schools, illustrating her lectures with her own photographs, slides, and drawings. Dormon developed outlines of forestry study, outlines that could be integrated into already existing subject areas such as geography and civics. The outlines were

particularized for grade levels:

Grades 1,2,3 — The chief aim in this work is to cultivate in the minds of the children a wholesome respect and love for trees.

Grades 4,5 — The time is here when the children of Louisiana must learn that trees are something to be protected and cared for, and not abused and destroyed.

Grades 6,7 — Children of these grades are old enough to grasp the idea of value of our forests, their rapid disappearance, and how we can and should insure reforestation.

Dormon provided specific classroom activities so that these aims could be realized. For example, first graders were encouraged to collect and plant seeds as well as to draw and color leaf shapes; fourth graders were taught the various uses of different woods; sixth graders prepared mounted collections of leaves and woods and learned conservation methods. Her

presentations were so effective that she was invited to speak at many places and was even offered a "name-your-salary" position to provide similar services for Mississippi.

Not only did Dormon remain loyal to Louisiana, she also remained faithful to her dream of preserving a tract of virgin pine and establishing a national forest. Engaging her lawyer-brother to draft an enabling act that would allow the purchase of lands for the forest, publicizing through articles and addresses the importance of the forest, guiding officials and other interested people through the forest she wished to save—Caroline literally worked day and night.

Support grew. The federal government appropriated funds to purchase the forest lands, including many tracts of virgin timber. However, a government official who had been authorized to buy the timber land for \$80 an acre offered Crowell-Spencer only \$12 an acre.



The vibrant nature of Carrie Dormon's personality shines through in both these photographs--the one at left taken in youth, and the one below in old age. Her home, Briarwood, is now the Caroline Dormon Nature Preserve. It is located in the northern sandhills of Natchitoches parish on La. Hwy. 9 between Saline and Campti. The area is, in effect, a "wild garden."





Scenes of devastation like that above often resulted from logging operations until Caroline Dormon and others campaigned for conservation. At right, biographer Fran Holman Johnson is shown on a visit to Briarwood. Below, curator Richard Johnson of the Caroline Dormon Nature Preserve enjoys the shade of a 250-year-old pine named Grandpappy.



This blunder resulted in the destruction of that virgin timber, but 76,589 acres of cut-over land that would be reforested became on June 10, 1930, Kisatchie National Forest, a name selected by Dormon to honor its original Indian inhabitants.

In addition to crusading for a national forest, Carrie succeeded in awakening a number of botanical societies to the flora of Louisiana, including the New York Botanical Garden, the California Academy of Sciences, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and Harvard.

In a letter to Donald Wyman, noted horticulturist at the Arnold Arboretum, Carrie wrote: "I have tried to be a sort of missionary in getting people interested in our fascinating native flora."

The United States Department of Agriculture enlisted Carrie's knowledge of plants "for the use of Government as a measure of national preparedness." She also grew various species of goldenrod for Thomas Edison who was experimenting with the plant as a potential source of rubber.

Carrie warned that "gardening is a virulent disease and highly contagious," and she bantered that she would continue planting until she "was planted." With natural springs and aged humus, Briarwood, Carrie's permanent home by 1917, contained a native collection of wild ferns, violets, phlox, fringed orchids, and masses of wild azalea. To this native sanctuary, Carrie added other flora, especially iris.

Dormon shared her knowledge of plants by writing articles and books. In an article for *Home Gardening*, Carrie described her iris endeavors: "Here in my sand hills, I have done a bit of hybridizing, and through sheer luck can claim some few without apology. (Most of mine go over the fence as far as I can throw them!)"

Dormon's writings were always "poured right out of experience." In "Flowers Native to the Deep South," she included two species that had never previously been listed in any other book: Southern Indian pipes and *Spiranthes odorator*.

Because of Carrie's knowledge of plants and trees, she was employed in 1940 by the Department of Highways as highway beauti-

fication consultant. When Carrie received employment forms listing her job as "beautician," she wrote the Civil Service office, insisting that "my work is quite different."

The job title was only the first of many bureaucratic hurdles as Carrie again pioneered new ground. Carrie asked the Highway Department to interject itself into more judicious clearing along roads. Carrie felt that some roadside workers did not appreciate the difference between "brush" and "bushes." The unrestricted burning of trees and shrubs was costly to the state. The burned areas were unsightly, easily eroded areas which later would have to be replanted.

Carrie appealed to Harry Henderlite, chief engineer for the Department of Highways: "I DARE you to go out with the engineer and me...drive from Baton Rouge to Bogalusa, and see for yourself. I believe that you will realize that I am not talking of something unreasonable or impossible. It is more a question of leaving the roadside alone than doing more....Please get this thought clearly: instead of asking the Department to spend more money, I am beseeching that you spend far less."

Carrie battled other highway problems, including zoning laws and billboard guidelines. Carrie was also opposed to a legislative resolution that would ask the state to fence all highway roadsides: "The idea of the Highway Department fencing 38,000 miles of highway staggers the imagination. And the maintenance of same would be stupendous."

Another problem that diminished the natural beauty of roadsides was litter. Carrie requested that signs prohibiting littering and dumping on rights-of-way be erected and that penalties for such be levied, but her campaign for clean and beautiful highways focused on the individual's responsibility to the environment.

Carrie was a pioneer in other areas of conservation. She rallied for limits on hunting seasons: "I cannot believe that Congress will be influenced by the hollow noise so transparently coming from the makers of ammunition (and this is not intended for wit) and allow an open season on waterfowl." She was also dismayed at the indiscriminate use of insecticides such as DDT based on the argument of cost: "Can anything be 'cheap' that wipes out our precious heritage of wildlife?"

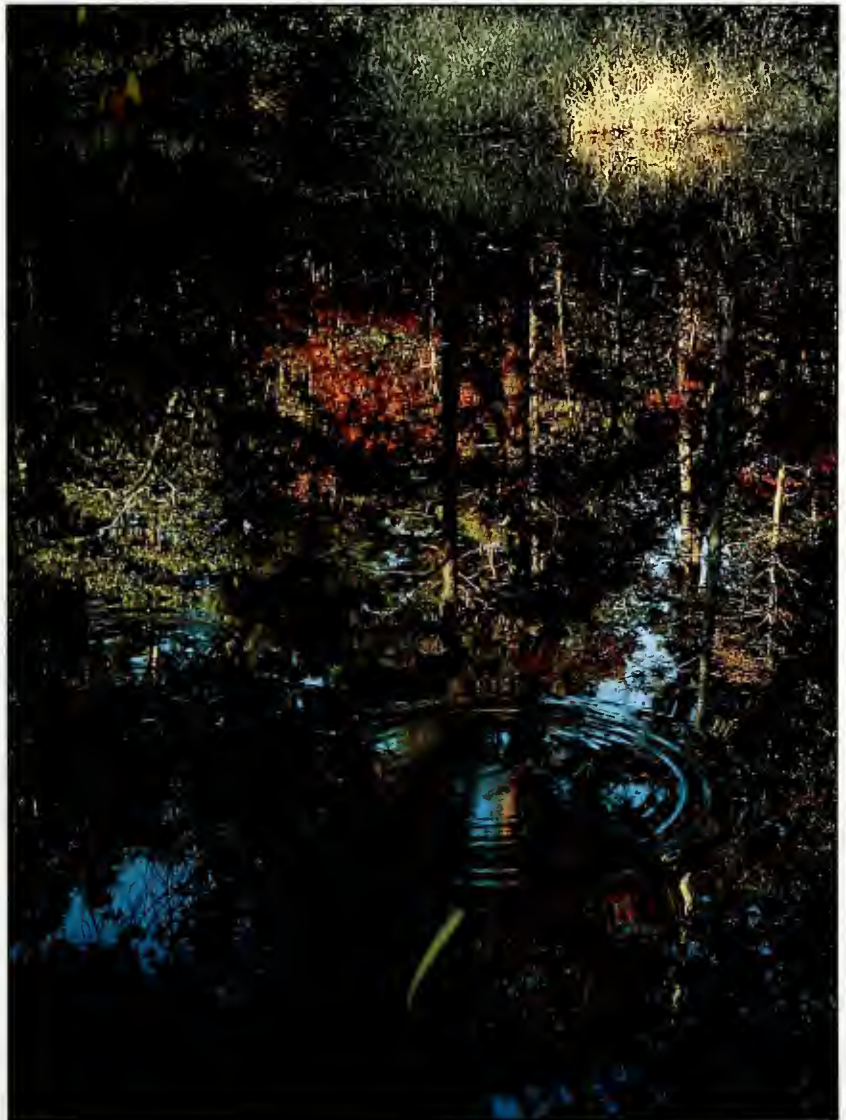
In an application for a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1942, Carrie wrote: "I was born with something—I call it 'the gift of the wild

things'—and because I am simple myself, and have a sympathetic heart, I can understand animals and simple people to an unusual degree. I see, too, so much that others miss. When I know so many lovely things, I feel greedy in keeping them all to myself."

Greedy, Caroline Dormon was not. She was the first to promote the establishment of a national forest in Louisiana; she was the first woman to be employed by the United States Forestry Department; she was appointed by Franklin D. Roosevelt as the only woman member of the quadricentennial De Soto Commission; she was at the forefront of preservation and beautification programs, growing and painting and writing about her native wildflowers and wildlife; and she willed her lifelong home and land to future generations.

She was a pioneer who "prepared the heritage of those (who have come after her)." □

All of nature's majestic beauty is mirrored in this pond at Briarwood, Caroline Dormon's birthplace and home in Natchitoches Parish.





A Deer Season Advisory Committee has undertaken to develop a five-year deer hunting season proposal that is acceptable to a majority of both those individuals who prefer to hunt deer with dogs and those who prefer to still hunt.

HUNTERS TACKLE DOG ISSUE

H

unting deer with dogs is a long-standing and honorable tradition in Louisiana and the Southeast, imported from Europe when the region was first settled. In recent years, however, changing attitudes and land use patterns have put deer hunting with dogs at the center of a raging controversy that last year even boiled over into the state Legislature.

"At a time when they were facing issues such as a potential budget deficit in the range of several hundreds of millions of dollars, education reform and abortion, legislators were embroiled in debate over the number of days an individual can hunt deer with dogs," said A. Kell McInnis III, acting secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

"Deer hunting is supposed to be fun and therapeutic," he continued, "and it's very unfortunate that it is causing such concern among our citizenry that they are compelled to seek relief from the Legislature."

In an effort to mitigate this long-standing and heated conflict, the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission established a Deer Season Advisory Committee and bestowed upon it the unenviable task of developing a five-year deer hunting season proposal that is acceptable to a majority of both those individuals who prefer to hunt deer with dogs and those who prefer to still hunt.

Included in this group are representatives of all major parties to the conflict, the Louisiana Legislature, the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, dog hunters, still hunters and landowners. Working within an established biological framework, this group will develop the season recommendation through a series of structured negotiating sessions.

"A five-year proposal was chosen because it was felt that stability was one of the main things needed," said Wade Byrd, project coordinator and facilitator of the negotiation process.

"Obviously, the plan will have to have some mechanism to allow response to drastic environmental changes. We know that. But, by covering five years, the proposal will defuse those anxieties caused by uncertainty and rumor over what's going to happen in the future," Byrd said. "Additionally, it will allow hunters to better plan their schedules to coincide with hunting season."

The advisory committee held its initial meeting in early November. At that meeting, it developed the following potential elements of a broad solution to the conflict:

-- Identify lands most suitable for dog hunting (biology and current use) and consider possible changes to the current deer

hunting areas based on the findings.

-- Develop better methods to control inappropriate behavior, i.e. hunting from roads, repeatedly and wantonly running dogs on lands belonging to others.

-- Require tagging of dogs to allow identification of owner.

-- Regulate training of dogs during off season.

-- Require specific breeds for dogs used in congested areas.

-- Develop system of appropriate recourse for landowner. This topic includes such diverse and complex parts as an extension of trespass regulations to cover dogs and what to do about small landowners isolated in predominantly dog hunting areas who depend on adjoining lands to maintain their deer herd but do not want dogs on their property.

-- Require a minimum tract size for dog hunting.

The group is now seeking public response to these suggestions. Interested sportsmen should contact a member or members of the advisory committee directly. The names and addresses of committee members are attached.

The next meeting of the advisory committee is scheduled for Friday, January 11, in Baton Rouge. Meetings of the committee are working sessions, and participation is limited to committee members. The public is invited to attend and observe.

Additionally, Byrd said he is available to address interested sportsmen and civic organizations. Groups desiring more information are urged to contact him at 504-765-2919.

The final five-year deer hunting season proposal should be developed by March and will be followed by a series of public hearings around the state.

"The real shame about this ongoing conflict between two competing groups of hunters is that it is expending time and energy that could be focused on other problems such as the continuing destruction of prime wildlife habitat, the loss of available hunting areas and a serious decline in hunter participation rates," concluded McInnis.

"This is a chance to put this conflict behind us and move on to more important matters. I hope we take advantage of it." □

Wildlife & Fisheries Commission

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Cotton Fairchild
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Andy Kipper
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You may have a creature living in your garden that has a head shaped like the blade of a shovel, dozens of eyes distributed along the edge of the blade, an appetite that only needs satisfying once every three months, and that can reproduce by simply pinching off a piece of itself. Dr. Jerome A. Jackson, Professor of Biological Sciences at Mississippi State University and a frequent contributor to *The Weekend Gardener Journal* and other publications, describes the shovel-headed garden worm and its "lifestyle."

Shovel-Headed Garden Worm

Article and photography by Jerome A. Jackson



As a biologist and a science fiction buff, I am always intrigued by the strange creatures that emerge from the minds of "sci fi" writers. But creatures right in our backyards can be as bizarre as those described from distant planets, and I've often thought that biologists have the greatest potential as science fiction writers because of the diversity of life right here on old terra firma.

For example, what would you say if I suggested that you might have a creature living in your garden that has a head shaped like the blade of a shovel, dozens of eyes distributed

along the edge of the blade, an appetite that only needs satisfying once every three months, and that can reproduce by simply pinching off a piece of itself?

What I have described is an animal that apparently arrived here as a hitchhiker — not from another planet, but from the other side of our own. So little is known of it that it usually is referred to by its Latin name — *Bipalium kewense* — but has also been dubbed the "shovel-headed garden worm" as a result of its shape and its propensity for showing up in gardens.

Bipalium kewense was first discovered in

1878 in the Royal Botanic Gardens — the famous Kew Gardens in the suburbs of London, from which it got its name. It had apparently arrived hidden in soil or on plants brought to the gardens from Southeast Asia. It has now successfully invaded at least 47 countries and every continent — as a stow-away.

First recorded in the United States in 1891, the shovel-headed garden worm has now been reported from most states east of the Mississippi, including Louisiana, and from Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas and California. Early records were from greenhouses and warm coastal areas. More recent records have been from cooler inland areas away from greenhouses, suggesting that the shovel-headed garden worm is adapting quite well to its new environments.

In Louisiana it has been reported from New Orleans and Baton Rouge, from along the Mississippi River levee between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, and from a cemetery in Pineville.

The shovel-headed garden worm is a "flatworm" — a member of one of the most primitive groups of animals. It is capable of sexual reproduction, but each individual is both male and female and the coming together of two individuals results in the fertilization of the eggs of each.

Apparently sexual reproduction is limited to those populations that remain in the tropics — Vietnam, Indonesia and other areas of Southeast Asia. In temperate areas the only type of reproduction known is the simple splitting of one individual into two — a pinching off of an inch or so of the animal's normal four-to-eight-inch body. The pinched off segment eventually develops a head and grows to maturity — a clone of its parent. When a new head begins to develop, it is white. Rare individuals have been reported that were up to a foot long.

These long, yellow-brown, flatworms with five dark stripes down the back seem to glide along any surface they encounter. Their movement is by means of microscopic hair-like structures, cilia, which act as thousands of tiny feet to propel the animal. These same cilia help the shovel-headed garden worm seize and hold earthworms.

The shovel-headed garden worm produces a slimy secretion which protects it from drying out. If you pick one up, it feels much like handling an earthworm.

In dry weather the shovel-headed garden worm produces an added protective coating of the mucous. If it needs to descend from something, the mucous can also double as an escape "rope," allowing the animal to drop slowly.

The shovel-headed garden worm is most active at night, retreating to the underside of rocks and logs during the heat of the day. It burrows in the soil much like the earthworms it actively pursues as food. Excess rain brings the shovel-headed garden worm to the surface to prevent drowning, and it is during such wet periods that it is usually discovered.

The side-to-side undulating movement of the shovel-headed garden worm's head is the characteristic which attracts the most human attention. The battery of light and chemical sensors located there suggest that this behavior helps keep the worm informed of its surroundings. No doubt its earthworm prey are thus located in a manner reminiscent of the sniffing of a bloodhound that is hot on a trail — although the sensory system of the bloodhound is so much more complex.

The questions most asked about the shovel-headed garden worm are: "Can it hurt me?" and "What harm does it do?" Fortunately the answer to both these questions appears to be negative. Dogs and cats occasionally will eat one of these worms, but they are usually quickly regurgitated.

This tropical traveler has been referred to as a "pseudoparasite" because it is known to sometimes survive inside other animals, but it is not known to cause them any harm. So far as is known, the shovel-headed garden worm lives only on earthworms. Thus unless you happen to grow earthworms commercially, there seems to be no reason to be concerned about its presence.

If you find the shovel-headed garden worm in your area, Dr. Jackson is interested in documenting its presence. Specimens preserved in ordinary rubbing alcohol mixed with water (1/3 water, 2/3 alcohol) should be sent to: Dr. Jerome A. Jackson, Box Z, Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, MS 39762. □

These long, yellow-brown, flatworms with five dark brown stripes are referred to as pseudoparasites because they are known to survive inside other animals but do them no harm. They are believed to survive solely on earthworms.



LAW L I N E S

Behind the Badge

BY CAPT. KEITH LaCAZE

Wildlife agents use every means of transportation available in the business of enforcing fish and game laws. Boats, 4-wheel drive trucks and all-terrain vehicles are the mainstay of the division. They are, in most situations, completely adequate for the task at hand.

Other situations, however, may call for another form of transport. Checking miles of marsh for illegal bait prior to the opening of waterfowl season and access to poachers in remote, isolated areas are just two situations where the wildlife agent's best chance for success depends on aerial transportation. A helicopter is often the best bet.

The absence of a helicopter from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' air fleet has been cause for concern for many years. Departmental airplanes have been used effectively to enforce the regulations, but their inability to land in confined spaces or hover and observe suspected violators has been a limiting factor.

When situations arose where a helicopter was essential to the success of an operation, the department had to rely on other agencies. In joint efforts with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, federal agents could, on occasion, provide a helicopter. The combination of state and federal officers reinforced with a helicopter, proved a fatal blow to many waterfowl baiting and overbagging activities.

In cases with no federal involvement, state agents had to either do without or borrow a pilot and helicopter from the state police. State police business took top priority, of course, and at times the helicopter would be called away in the middle of a wildlife case leaving our agents unable to complete the job.

Agents in the Sky!

The combination of airborne agents in radio contact with teams on the ground has proven effective time and again. And when news of the department's newly-acquired Bell 47G helicopter filters into the outlaw community, it will surely prove to be as valuable to deterring crime as the bird itself will be in stopping violations in progress.

The good news is all that is about to change. In December 1989, the Fish and Wildlife Service acquired a new Bell 206 Jet Ranger helicopter. The decision was made to turn the Slidell-based Bell 47G in to the Office of Aircraft Services as surplus equipment.

The LDWF had expressed interest in acquiring a helicopter and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service readily came to our assistance in obtaining this one.

In a June 1990 memorandum to the Office of Aircraft Services, James W. Pulliam Jr., regional director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, requested that "in lieu of the sale of the Bell 47G, your office declare it excess and facilitate a transfer to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries."

Fish and Wildlife officials then helped in preparing necessary documentation. The request was approved and ownership transferred to this department.

The Bell 47G helicopter has a top speed of 60-80 knots depending on wind conditions. It is equipped with pontoons for landing on water and seats two people, the pilot and one passenger. A vast array of spare parts came with the bird and it will

be completely checked out prior to going into service.

Tentative plans are to base the helicopter in the New Orleans area but it will travel statewide. It will be used for all aspects of wildlife law enforcement including search and rescue, waterfowl patrol, monitoring sport and commercial fishing, and spotting illegal night hunters. During off-season, the helicopter will complement biological efforts in game surveys and observation of wildlife activity.

The combination of airborne agents in radio contact with teams on the ground has proven effective time and again. Not only will the helicopter be effective on specific cases, but when word of its presence filters to the outlaw community, the thought of agents in the sky will be a deterrent worthy of strong consideration.

The addition of the Bell 47G to the department's inventory is another step forward for wildlife enforcement in Louisiana. This combination of first-rate equipment and well-trained agents in today's Enforcement Division guarantees effective protection of our wildlife resources now and their existence for generations to come. □



Bunnies, Beagles and Briar Patches

FUNNY SIDE UP

BY GLYNN HARRIS

"Well, we ran through the briars and we ran through the brambles and we ran through the places where a rabbit couldn't go..."

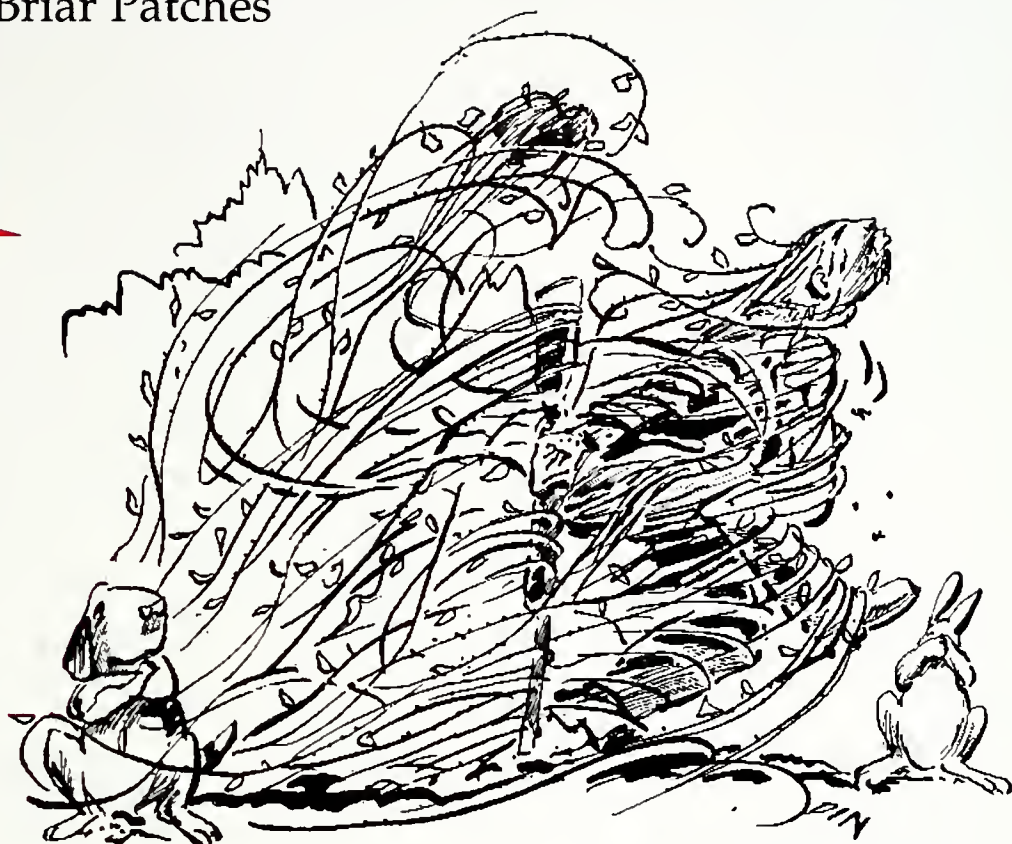
I found myself humming this old Johnny Horton tune through clenched teeth as I plunged into just such a place one muggy—even if it was winter—morning last year. I found, however, that not only could I get through the briars and brambles, so could a rabbit and a pack of snuffing, squalling beagles. They did it with much more grace and finesse than I, and with significantly less blood loss, I might add.

The reason such a God-forsaken thicket was chosen for our hunt was that the place was teeming with big swampers.

It was a constant din of bawling beagles, whooping and hollering hunters and occasional shotgun fire, not to mention the colorful phrases I came up with to describe the briar that had just grabbed me by the ear lobe, stretching the tender appendage to ridiculously outsized proportions.

But since the big swampers were running around within the confines of the thicket, those hunters getting the most shots were those who jumped in there where the action was.

It took me awhile for this fact to register on me, as on the first few races, I elected to stand just outside the thicket. I was hoping that maybe a rabbit or two would see things my way and choose a less briar-cluttered



Art by David Norwood

route to travel. Such was not the case, however, as my hunting partners were filling their game bags with rabbits while I played host to a cardinal, two blue-jays and a beagle that ran up to me from the thicket, placed his front paws on his hips and gave me a quick tongue-lashing.

I thought I detected a slight bit of agitation in his voice when he asked me, "Hey, buddy, you rabbit hunting or bird watching? C'mon, chicken, get in the game!"

So as not to further agitate the impatient canine, I began gingerly picking my way through the briars. Actually, the briars did most of the picking, and not too gingerly, I noted.

Pressing forward toward a little clearing ahead, I noticed, with a degree of interest, the approach of three of my hunting buddies, shotguns at port arms. It was only after they realized that it was I who was flailing about in the briars that they lowered their weapons.

I must admit that my squealing, bawling and snuffing did sound amazingly like a pack of beagles hot on the trail of a swamper. I made a mental note to work at perfecting this obvious gift for possible appearances on Oprah and Letterman. My partners, however, dull-witted sluggards that they were, apparently had little appreciation for my talent what with a real rabbit chase going on nearby.

After what seemed like a month in Baghdad, we broke for lunch, and the group began mapping out plans for the afternoon hunt. It was at that point that I breathed a sigh of relief that I had driven alone to the hunt in my truck. Thinking quickly, I stammered out my need to get back home as quickly as possible as a family member was in need of emergency care, and I had to be there.

I consider having to have briars surgically extracted from my torso while I'm receiving a couple of units of blood an emergency, don't you? □

Conservation Notes

Breed Named 4-H Winner

William H. "Bill" Breed of Farmerville has been selected as a national winner in the 4-H Wildlife and Fisheries Adult Volunteer Leader Contest. Breed is among the six national winners who will receive their awards at the 56th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Edmonton, Canada, in March.

Breed is employed with the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries as an education area coordinator for 11 parishes in north Louisiana.

His contributions to the 4-H Club program as an 4-H adult leader include project work in Union, Lincoln, Ouachita, Richland, Caldwell and Morehouse parishes. As a volunteer leader for more than six years, Breed presented over 350 programs reaching approximately 18,700 youth.

Programs include such topics as alligators, water and boating safety, fur industry, poisonous snakes, conservation, bald eagle and water fowl. Hunter Education Certification classes are among Breed's most popular courses, and he has certified more than 350 4-H Club members in hunter education. Breed is also a facilitator for Project WILD.

"4-H has been a part of my life since I joined 4-H in the fourth grade," says Breed. "I feel its time for me to give something back to 4-H. As an adult, as a 4-H leader, I realize the impact that I have on a child's life. I want to influence and leave positive thoughts about our environment in a child's mind. 4-H gives a child the opportunity to be a doer, not just a watcher--a leader, not a follower."

Soldiers Ask For Caps

Sgt. Tom Glynn, a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division, is circulating a letter appealing for the donation of sportsmen's baseball caps for use by troops deployed in the Middle East.

Glynn writes: "The grim reality has finally hit us sportsmen--there

will be no hunting season for us this year. Heck, we darned near missed half the fishing season, too!

"Some of us have devised a plan to heighten the morale of the troops while we wait to do our duty. Would you be willing to participate in our campaign to gather support of sporting organizations across America for our sportsmen in uniform?"

"All we ask is if you have some baseball caps with your logo on them, would you consider donating a few to some country boys in the desert? We would appreciate a little bit of Americana out here, and it probably wouldn't be bad P.R. either."

The address is: Sgt. Tom Glynn, HHC 82nd Avn Bde, APO New York 09656.

Oil Spills to Be Studied

An international training and field course entitled "The Impact and Mitigation of Oil and Gas Activities on Coastal Environments" will take place April 11-16. The activities will be based in New Orleans and the LUMCON Marine Center in Cocodrie.

Using firsthand experience from Alaska, the North Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, the 12 faculty members will draw on experiences from the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound (Alaska), the Sullom Voe oil export terminal in the Shetland Islands (Scotland), the LOOP Deepwater oil import terminal offshore Louisiana, and the oil and gas infrastructure in coastal Louisiana.

The topics to be covered include oil spill contingency planning and cleanup techniques, and coastal erosion and wetland loss.

Field trips using boats, float planes and vans will be conducted in the coastline and wetland areas of Louisiana, including the LOOP Deepwater Oil Port. The course is organized by the Louisiana Geological Survey of Louisiana State University and the Centre for Environmental Planning and Management at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. For further details contact Dr. Donald W. Davis, Louisiana Geological Survey, University Station, Box G, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70893, (504) 388-5320.

Schneider Joins Board

Gov. Buddy Roemer has appointed John F. "Jeff" Schneider of Pontchatoula to serve on the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission.

Schneider's six-year term began Dec. 10 when he replaced Dr. Don Hines whose term expired.

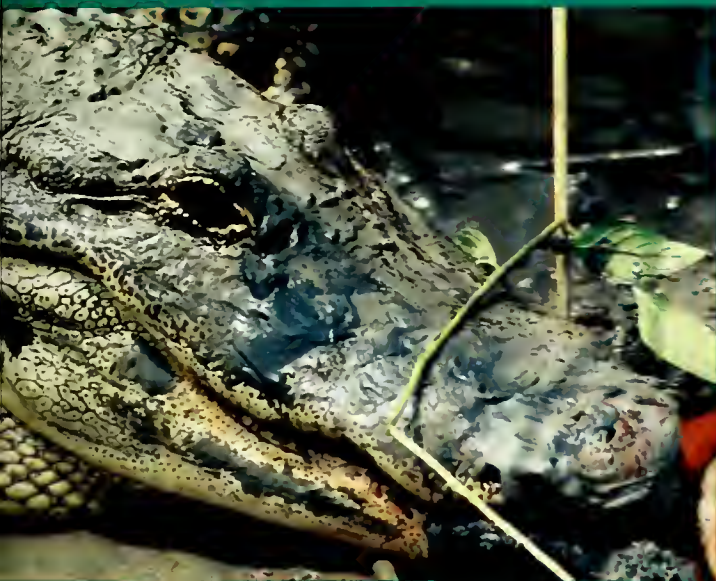
Schneider, 42, is a natural resource developer and manager, and is involved in timber and wildlife property management in southeast Louisiana.

Schneider graduated from North Carolina State University with a bachelor's degree in forestry and minors in wildlife management, forest economics and wood technology.



Wildlife Float Paraded: Interested youngsters gather around N.J. Stafford, biologist with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, to hear about deer and wild turkeys. The float was paraded through the streets of Franklinton during the Washington Parish Fair. It was designed by LDWF District VII staff members to promote the department's wildlife management areas and their recreational opportunities.

LOUISIANA Conservationist TV MAGAZINE



These oddly prehistoric creatures were once so few in number that they were federally protected, but now are once again abundant enough to provide an important revenue source for many Louisiana alligator farmers -- *The American Alligator*. **Airs January 1. Rerun February 21.**



January 1: At the end of a dusty road in the hardwoods of central Louisiana are some little-known but well-loved fishing lakes -- Larto-Saline. **Rerun February 21.**

January 10: *Live Call-In:* The black bass is Louisiana's premier freshwater gamefish -- with over a half million sporting anglers attempting to outwit this wily critter. Fisheries biologists are proposing a new aggressive black bass management plan to enhance this multi-million dollar sport. Tune in to hear the experts explain the details. And take this chance to **CALL IN** your comments and questions.

January 17: Louisiana boasts a first class oyster industry. Come get your feet wet aboard a classic oyster lugger. Also, get a bird's eye view of exquisite and colorful miniatures of the bird world -- exotic finches. **Rerun February 28.**

January 24: The secret to our internationally renowned cooking is in the spices. Tonight, we visit a century-old Louisiana red pepper farm on Avery Island. Also, some fishermen who seek out the

tough, tackle-busting redfish often strike out. Here are some tips and techniques to improve your skills.

January 31: Aquatic Education--a fun new educational program in Louisiana. Also, foresters discover an ancient bald cypress swamp -- the ultimate in Louisiana beauty and natural heritage. How appropriate that they have designated one of this state's trees the National Champion Bald Cypress Tree.

February 7: Pan fish are America's favorite fish -- easy to catch and unexcelled table fare. Learn a well-tryed approach to fishing: "Light is Right". Also, you may be surprised to find powerful raptors atop the tallest cypress trees in our swamps. Come see where bald eagles nest in Louisiana.

February 14: Many of us are excited about hunting game in a familiar track of backwoods and awed by a mist rolling across a just-discovered red dirt hillside. Tune in to this half hour special and learn how we change and grow in our attitudes about wilderness.

Thursdays at 7 p.m.



THE LPB
TELEVISION
NETWORK



Ducks Switched on Poster

Inside the last issue of the Louisiana Conservationist, a fold out page of various waterfowl was included. I feel the need to point out an error on your behalf. The lesser scaup was confused with the ring-necked duck. I have been an avid hunter and conservationist for more than 20 years and never been taught differently. Please respond to this inquiry.

David Duplechin
Villette Platte

Letters flowed in from loyal and observant readers all over the United States pointing out the mix-up between the lesser scaup and ring-necked duck on our "Waterfowl of Louisiana" poster in the Nov./Dec. issue. The artwork for the those two species was mistakenly switched at the time of printing. We apologize for the error.

Editor

Liked the Recipes Calendar

I am happy to have this opportunity to express my thanks to you for the enjoyment I have received from your publication. I eagerly await each issue.

I especially appreciate the fine recipes that accompany each issue. I have had the pleasure of making almost all of them.

Unfortunately up here on the frozen prairie some ingredients are hard to come by. Crawfish are flown up here only once, at the peak of the season. They are available for only

one week at best. After that, we have to try substitutes. Of course, alligator is a myth here. It is impossible to get.

This year's calendar with all those splendid recipes is a special treat.

I also enjoyed the story of how Arthur Pierre Sr. caught his monster catfish in the Sept./Oct. issue.

I hope to be able to visit Louisiana once again this coming January.

Again, let me thank you for the enjoyment and good food your publication has brought to me.

Fred Tower
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

We had mixed responses to our latest calendar. Our regular "Bayou Kitchen" feature is very popular with readers, and fish and game, not only the sport of harvesting it but how to prepare it afterwards, is a big part of what we're all about. However, our 1991-92 calendar will again feature wildlife photography.

Editor

Duplicate Mailings

This last year by some mistake, I was receiving two copies of the magazine some months. Please check your records to make the mailing correction. Thank you.

P.S. I enjoy this magazine very much. When you love the outdoors and the beauty of our state as much as I do, the photography your staff has in this magazine just seems to put you right there in the pictures.

Thank you for the continued concern and hard work you are doing to make this magazine what it is today. Only wish we could get one every month!!

Again, my thanks to you.

Bruce Lee
Minden

There are a number of duplicated addresses on our list at the time being, and we ask that anyone receiving more than one copy of the magazine let us know in

writing so we can correct it. We have recently been put on an ancillary budget, which means no general fund monies are available to us to produce or print the magazine. This is why we have begun merchandising books and other items through the magazine. If everyone would let us know about duplicate mailings as you have done, it would help us eliminate excess costs so that we can continue to deliver the quality publication you enjoy.

Editor

Why Not Grow Mangroves?

Just finished reading "The Return of the Flame Birds" by Charles W. Frank in the Nov./Dec. 1990 Louisiana Conservationist. Always amazed at what I can learn. For instance, I never knew that we had mangrove trees.

If they are so valuable in Florida, maybe Louisiana can come up with a new industry and sell them to Japan. Or use them to help stop our own beach erosion.

Some folks around Grand Isle, as well as Slidell, collect old Christmas trees to form fences to build up soil on or near the shoreline. Why not grow their own trees--mangroves?

And maybe the Hackberry people could transplant some seedlings to other state refuges, and build up more habitat to help the Flame Birds return home.

Keep up the good work.

Unsigned
Baton Rouge



"I was hoping you would ask me about him."



An encore appearance of your favorite cookbook!



our Department of Wildlife and Fisheries first issued *The Official Louisiana Seafood & Wild Game Cookbook* in 1985. We printed 20,000 copies and sold them as

fast as we could mail them out. Since then, we've had to turn away many disappointed buyers. Now we are able to offer a second printing of this phenomenally successful cookbook. It contains 450 kitchen-tested recipes that took us a decade to assemble, set off by colorful, mouth-watering photographs.

At only \$14.95 per copy plus postage, you'll want to order copies for all of your friends for any occasion. And don't forget yourself! It's a book to be used and cherished for a lifetime.



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Make checks and money orders payable to LSU Press or charge to your MasterCard or Visa. Your payment of \$14.95 per cookbook must include \$1.50 postage and handling for the first book ordered and \$.50 for each additional book. Louisiana residents must add 4% sales tax. East Baton Rouge Parish residents, please add an additional 4% sales tax. Allow two to four weeks for delivery.

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Bayou Kitchen

by Wayne Miller

Roast of Venison

Venison roast (5 to 10 lbs.)
2 cups dry red wine
1/2 pound salt pork, cut into strips
3 cloves garlic, slivered
Olive oil
Salt, freshly ground pepper
1 cup red current jelly
Powdered ginger and cloves
1 tsp. lemon juice
1/2 cup sour cream
Flour (if necessary)
1 tbsp. brandy (good)

Marinade

5 tbsp. butter
1 large mild onion, chopped
1 cup chopped green onions
2 large carrots, chopped
4 whole cloves
1/2 tsp. thyme
1/2 tsp. marjoram
1/2 tsp. tarragon
1/2 tsp. basil
1/2 tsp. rosemary
Pinch sugar

Fry onion, green onions and carrots in 5 tablespoons of butter. Add cloves and other dry spices with pinch of sugar. Add 1 cup red wine, heat thoroughly. Put mixture through a coarse sieve. Set aside. Brush venison with olive oil, and dust generously with black pepper. Add some red pepper if desired. Pour the marinade over roast and cover. Refrigerate and turn several times during a 12-hour or longer period.

Before roasting, lard the venison generously with salt pork by punching at least 12 holes in the roast with a sharp knife and insert the salt meat and garlic pieces; insert meat thermometer. Roast at 350 degrees as for a beef roast. Baste frequently with remaining marinade and drippings. When roast is tender, remove from the roasting pan but keep in warm oven while preparing the gravy.

In the roasting pan, slowly melt 1 cup of current jelly with the drippings and marinade. Add 1 cup red wine while simmering; add pinch of powdered ginger and cloves. Add lemon juice. Thicken gravy by simmering to reduce a little; slowly add sour cream. Blend. If thicker gravy is preferred, sprinkle a little flour and whisk thoroughly. Just before serving, add brandy and pour into gravy boat. Serve hot.

Photography by Ken Glaser



